Bondar Challenge Artist's Statement

Name: Christopher Carlyle

Title of My Photograph: *Mallards*
Date: 11/01/2011

Weather: overcast, 7 degrees Celsius
Location: Bellevue Park, Sault Ste Marie

Camera: Nikon D80 Digital Camera, Manual Handheld

Artist's Statement:

While I was out taking photographs I was intentionally looking for animals in the freshwater wetlands of the park. I feel like my mission was achieved because I was able to find the mallard ducks in a quiet state looking for food. They came to the edge of the pond when they sensed my presence and waited for the customary park visitor treats. When I didn't provide anything they dabbled at the edge of the pond. This gave me the opportunity to observe their behaviours and wait for the right moment to photograph them.

The photograph is a balanced composition. The male mallard is centre and a focal point for the image. The attending females are flanking the image and weighing down the corners. I'm pleased with the layers of rock and fallen leaves in the pond that have created depth. The repeating lines created by the dabbling mallards create patterns and add a mystery to what lies below the surface of the water. I waited for the ducks to immerse their heads in unison. I wasn't expecting the ducks to look so humorous with their heads below the surface.

The mallards live in a Nearctic Ecozone. The biome at Bellevue Park is a temperate deciduous forest. The maple and oak leaves in the water are from surrounding old growth trees. The winter temperatures and precipitation are imminent. On the day of this photo shoot the daylight was very dim and there was a good wind coming and going.

I think that the photograph could have been stronger if I had captured all the ducks with their heads below the water. The two female mallards at the top of the photo have their heads above the water. This doesn't seem as interesting to me. I found the domestic creatures interesting in their habitat but I would have preferred to go to a more challenging and remote environment.